

\$8

Life

is the  
ten Mike  
favorite  
a special  
to have

e of this  
years—  
\$8.00.

urgain of  
exciting  
Canada,

or two

.....

.....

.....

per-221

# MIKE SHAYNE



## MYSTERY MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER, 1968

VOL. 23, NO. 4

### NEW MIKE SHAYNE SHORT NOVEL

## DEATH IS MY MISTRESS

by BRETT HALLIDAY

*She had left her home, her loved ones, and no one knew why. Was it a man? Fear of disgrace? Rebellion against a too possessive family? Whatever it was, one thing began to be obvious. Her only dowry, besides beauty, was—Murder. And Mike Shayne alone dared guess why.*

..... 2 to 52

### EXCITING SUSPENSE NOVELET

SPADEWORK

MICHAEL KURLAND ..... 78

### ALL NEW STORIES

STAIN ON HIS HANDS

LEO MARGULIES DAN ROSS ..... 53

Publisher

THE CONSPIRATORS

CYLVIA KLEINMAN MICHAEL GILBERT ..... 60

Editorial Director

THE BOUNTY HUNTERS

HOLMES TAYLOR FRANK GRUBER ..... 100

Associate Editor

THE ACCIDENT

BILL PRONZINI ..... 117

YOU GOT TO WATCH BEN

JACK RITCHIE ..... 126

MIKE SHAYNE MYSTERY MAGAZINE, Vol. 23, No. 4, September, 1968. Published monthly by REKNOWN PUBLICATIONS, INC. 56 W. 45th St., N. Y., N. Y. 10036. Subscriptions, One Year (12 issues) \$6.00; Two Years (24 issues) \$12.00; single copies 50¢. Second-class postage paid at New York, N. Y. and at additional mailing offices. Places and characters in this magazine are wholly fictitious. © 1968, by REKNOWN PUBLICATIONS, INC. All rights reserved. Protection secured under the International and Pan-American copyright conventions. Printed in the United States of America. Postmaster—return 3579 to 56 W. 45th Street, New York, New York. 10036.

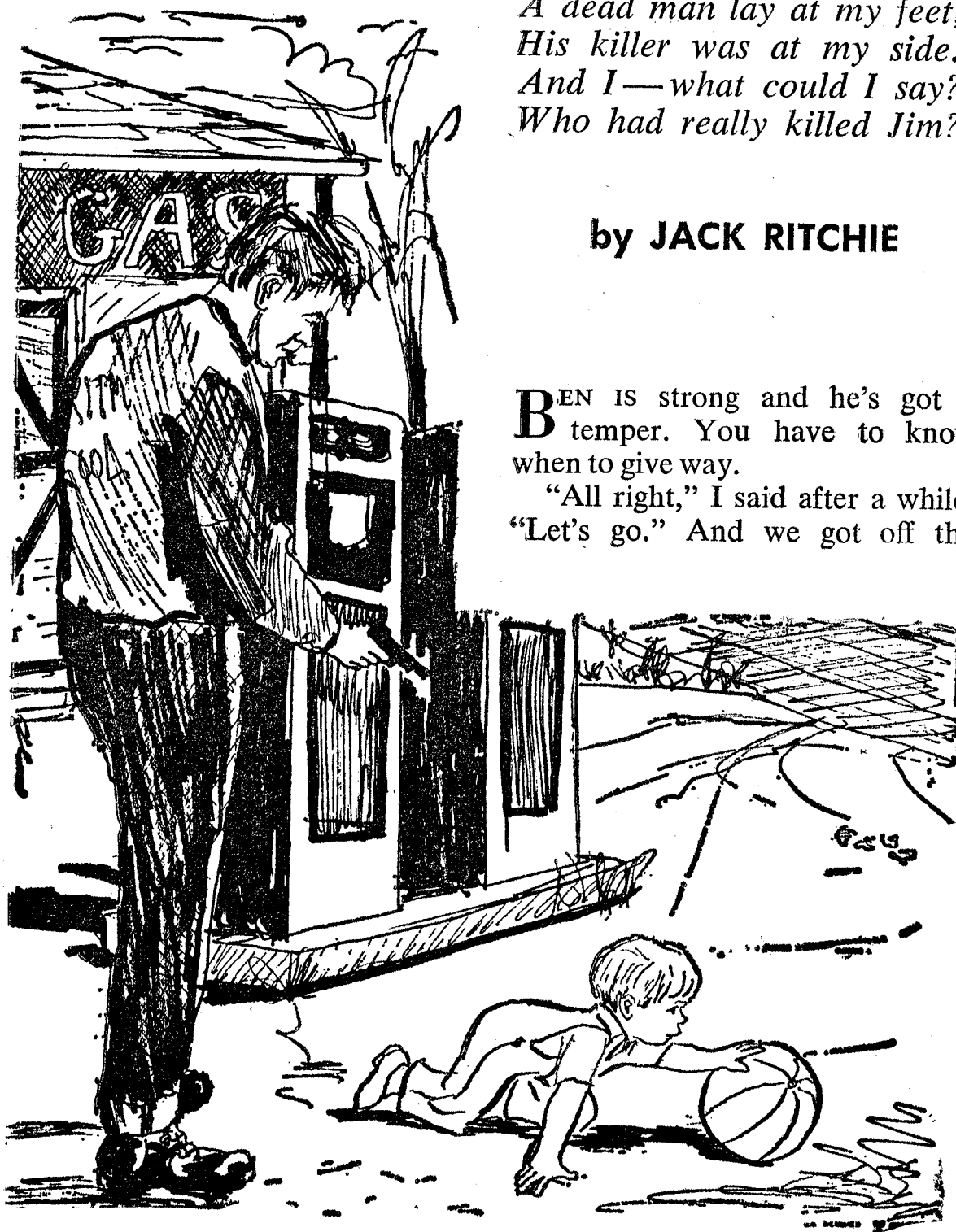
# YOU GOT TO WATCH BEN

*A dead man lay at my feet,  
His killer was at my side.  
And I—what could I say?  
Who had really killed Jim?*

by JACK RITCHIE

**B**EN IS strong and he's got a temper. You have to know when to give way.

"All right," I said after a while. "Let's go." And we got off the



front  
cousin Jim  
at the end of the

I watched  
You have to  
If you don't  
thing he picke

Up ahead  
ting on the  
the station.  
pistol again.

Jim usual  
between sh  
got the bra

He was  
didn't take  
beat his wi  
mean stre  
across any

Jim saw  
some cartr

He told  
the gun to  
a robbery.  
likes to fo

When v  
ed the gun

Ben th  
and he lau

I was  
"That gun

Jim s  
"Now we

at a cous  
the gun

"Well, c  
bullets  
laughed.

A ca  
pumps a  
pocket a



Ben stared at the gun the way he does when he tries to figure out what something is.

I was afraid he might drop it. "Give me the gun, Ben."

The orange inside his eyes went on again and I knew he was going to be stubborn.

I grabbed the barrel of the gun and pulled.

The noise didn't seem loud, but it was sharp.

My heart stopped for a second and I thought that the bullet might have hit me. But then it started beating again and I knew I wasn't hurt.

I turned and saw Jim standing at the rear of the customer's car. Just standing there stiff, his back toward us.

I noticed the small hole in the back of his jacket, but the blood didn't come from there. It came from the bottom of his jacket.

And then suddenly he dropped.

I looked back at Ben. His mouth was open like he didn't understand what had happened.

The door of the station opened and the customer's eyes got wide when he saw Jim on the cement. "What happened?"

"It was an accident," I said.

The customer looked at Jim's body once more and then went back inside to the phone.

The first squad car came in just a couple of minutes, its light flashing, and then there were more.

I began to think hard about

what had happened. Would the police believe it was really an accident? And even if they did, what would they do to somebody like Ben? Did they have a special place where they would be kind to him?

One of the policemen took out a notebook. "Tell me about it."

I took a deep breath. "I'm the one who did it. I was holding the gun and I thought it was unloaded. I saw Jim take out the bullets, but I guess he forgot to count them."

They asked me more questions and I finally thought they were through, but then one of them came to the station from a house across the street.

"We got an eye witness," he said. "Lady across the street. About seventy or so and spends her time in a wheelchair on that screened porch." He looked at me. "It was an accident, all right, but not quite the way you tell it."

After supper I went out and sat on the front steps. I watched a woman get off at the bus stop.

She stopped in front of me. "Can you tell me where the Johnsons live?"

I nodded. "Right across the street. The white house."

She thanked me. "I suppose you go to school?"

I felt kind of proud. "I'm already in the fourth grade." I pointed to where Ben played with his fire engine in the dirt. "But my brother's nearly three and he can't even talk good yet."